



August mini-issue

Issue 71, August 2019

A monthly newsletter for UCL E-Learning Champions and anyone else interested in digital education. **Material in this mini-issue for the summer break is limited to the Need to Know section.** Please feel free to distribute and ask colleagues to subscribe via the link at the bottom of the newsletter.

Need to know

Moodle upgrade now complete

UCL's annual Moodle upgrade has now been completed. Version 3.7 brings several important feature enhancements as well as multiple minor changes across the platform. Details of these [can be found on the Digital Education blog](#). Due to the scale



of the changes Digital Education will continue to [update its documentation](#) over the summer period, but all features are already fully documented within [Moodle.org's official guidance](#).

Late summer assessments: two Moodles

This year also sees the first time that two live Moodle instances are maintained over the summer period. This is to ensure completion of Late Summer Assessments and UCL Summer Schools (LSA) within the correct cohorts and courses. The Moodle landing page will highlight both the LSA Moodle and Moodle for 2019/20 until the end of the LSA period (October), at which point moodle.ucl.ac.uk will direct users to the 2019/20 site. Full information around the use of the two instances and late summer assessments [can be found on the Digital Education blog](#).

Course Resets and Getting Ready for the new Academic Year

All material from the past academic year has now been captured in the Moodle Snapshot 2018/19. This will be editable until 20th September. Courses that have completed their yearly cycle or are no longer in use can now be reset in the Moodle 2019/20 instance. The reset process has changed slightly with a few additional steps, and full instructions can be found in [Digital Education's Moodle Course Resets Process blog post](#).

Module leads and administrators asked to 'Baseline Check' all Moodle courses by the start of the 2019/20 session

UCL's [E-learning Baseline](#) is designed to ensure consistent usability, availability, and quality of online learning materials. A simple online Baseline Checker has now been developed and is currently being piloted by the IOE. Module leaders will receive a link to check their modules in the coming weeks, but should you wish to gain access to the Checker sooner, please contact moodleproject@ucl.ac.uk including the relevant module code(s) and title(s).

For more information visit the [Teaching and Learning Portal blog post](#) or contact moodleproject@ucl.ac.uk.

Pilot of automatic transcripts for Lecturecast recordings

Digital Education is seeking existing users of Lecturecast to pilot 'automatic speech recognition' (ASR) functionality. ASR has the potential to provide invaluable support for students with hearing difficulties but can be a useful additional resource for all students. However, the system needs to be tested with a range of voices, accents, and subjects, including those with discipline-specific or specialist terminology, in order to assess the accuracy of the resulting transcripts and how much work might be involved to correct them. The project has been prompted by the legislation that came into effect last autumn to ensure that digital content is accessible by everyone, and we would also like to explore how useful students in pilot groups find the service.

To express an interest in joining the pilot please contact digitalaccessibility@ucl.ac.uk.

Accessibility as everyday practice? Blackboard Ally can help with that

UCL has acquired a new, game-changing technology called Blackboard Ally to improve accessibility of its digital learning resources.

Alternative formats on demand

Ally integrates seamlessly with Moodle and uses machine algorithms to convert common file types to alternative formats with no extra effort required from staff. For example, a staff member can upload a PowerPoint file to Moodle, but Ally will subsequently and automatically offer students the option to download the file in its original or a range of alternative formats including audio, PDF, ePub for eReaders, or Braille reader files.

Helping staff identify where improvements are needed

Ally also provides staff with feedback and guidance on the accessibility of their content. This includes files already present within Moodle and new files as they are uploaded. Using Ally and [Digital Education's guidance on creating accessible content](#), staff will be able to quickly identify what content needs attention and thus make better use of the time they have.

Ally will be available to all staff and students for the 2019/20 academic year, and to learn more about it review the [Blackboard Ally for LMS video](#). If you have any questions relating to Ally, please contact digi-ed@ucl.ac.uk.

Certified Membership of the Association for Learning Technology (CMALT) introductory meeting

After an excellent turn out at the introductory meeting for CMALT in July an additional online session will now be run on Thursday 29th August 1.30-2.30pm. To join the session launch the Collaborate session from 1.15pm. There's no need to book and a reminder will be sent nearer the time. A recording will be made available after the session.

Slides from the original session [can be found on the BLE website](#), while [the CMALT prospectus](#) covers everything you need to know about the scheme.

Register now for CMALT

To register to join the CMALT cohort, please complete [the online booking form](#). After registration an introductory welcome email will be sent by ALT containing links to all relevant documentation. Access to the BLE CMALT course on Moodle and BLE CMALT mailing list will also be provided.



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